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Metropolitan King County Council

District 11 Issue Update

Saving the Salmon:

What does it mean for the Eastside?

For months now, you may have heard or read that the federal government is considering listing the Puget Sound Chinook (King) salmon as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act. Additionally, you have probably heard that King County is one of 12 counties in western Washington affected by this listing. However, what I have not seen explained is the impact this listing will have on the everyday life of Eastside residents. So let me try to outline this issue in simple terms.

The Endangered Species Act, adopted by Congress in 1973, provides for the identification, protection and recovery of endangered and threatened animal and plant species throughout the United States. Under the current law, there are two types of listings: as a threatened species or an endangered species. In March of this year, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) proposed listing the Puget Sound Chinook salmon as threatened. In early 1999, it is anticipated that NMFS will formally list Chinook as threatened. This potential listing represents the first time that a major US metropolitan area has been affected by the Endangered Species Act. In basic terms, our area will be a national test case on applying the ESA in an "urban setting".

What does this mean for King County? In essence, the burden is on the jurisdictions with rivers and streams home to Puget Sound Chinook to demonstrate they are taking the steps necessary to help protect and restore the spawning habitat for Chinook salmon. In the I-5 corridor, King, Pierce and Snohomish counties are working together to coordinate the "urban" response. A 34 member Tri-County Executive Committee has been appointed to coordinate the habitat restoration plans for King, Pierce and Snohomish counties. The Tri-County Executive Committee is comprised of representatives of county and city governments, business, home builders, fish conservation groups and the Native American tribes.

How does this relate to District 11? As residents of District 11, you live in within the Cedar River Water Resource Inventory Area (WRIA). The Cedar river feeds Lake Washington. Lake Sammamish, while fed by Issaquah Creek, also feeds Lake Washington and is considered to be part of the Cedar River watershed.

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Inside this issue:

- ◆ ***New arts facilities for Eastside artists and patrons. See page 2***
- ◆ ***Endangered Species Act questionnaire; let me know your thoughts. See page 3***
- ◆ ***King County's new voting system - Coming your way soon! See page 4***

Celebrating New Arts Facilities on the Eastside:

Kirkland Opens New Performance Center

On June 12th, Metropolitan King County Council Chair Louise Miller and I joined the Kirkland community, the Kirkland Performance Center Board of Directors, members of the Kirkland City Council and King County Executive Ron Sims to cut the ribbon and formally open the new Kirkland Performance Center. After nearly 10 years of hard work led by the vision of Chuck Morgan and Bill Woods, the 400 seat performance hall is ready to begin its first season. Expecting over 250 performances and 75,000 patrons, it is clear the Performance Center will be a busy and well used facility.

I am particularly proud of the role the Metropolitan King County Council and King County Arts Commission played in helping to fund the \$5.53 million construction phase of this project. In total, King County contributed \$608,000 to the center. These funds coupled with other major donations from the City of Kirkland and private business and individuals enabled the construction of one of the most outstanding and modern performance halls in King County. In its inaugural season, the Kirkland Performance Center will host many impressive national and regional productions. Among them are: Pacific Northwest Ballet, Village Theatre, Spectrum Dance Theater, Empty Space Theatre, Northwest Chamber Orchestra, Earshot Jazz Festival, Eastside Music Theatre, King County Performance Network, Bellevue Philharmonic, Cabaret Productions



Bill Ballantine, Council Chair Louise Miller and Councilmember Jane Hague cut the ribbon at the June 12th opening of the new Performance Center, and Northwest Sinfonietta.

The completion of the Kirkland Performance Center is one major step toward the fulfillment of my vision for better facilities and a larger commitment to suburban arts. The Kirkland Performance Center will provide a first-class home on the Eastside for the best music, theater and dance that our region has to offer. King County through the Arts Commission and special commitments from the Council has been a true leader in committing new resources for the suburban arts. I look forward to the completion of several additional, new arts projects in the future.

King County Council Supports New Bellevue Art Museum

On Monday, June 15th, the Metropolitan King County Council unanimously passed a motion I introduced expressing our support for the Bellevue Art Museum and its capital campaign for a new facility – BAM 2000.

The Bellevue Art Museum's visions for a \$20 million new facility across Bellevue Way from Bellevue Square paves the way for the creation of another new, improved and much needed suburban arts facility. With over \$11 million of the \$20 million raised, BAM 2000 is well on its way toward breaking ground.

The new museum will have 36,000 square feet of exhibition space and three galleries designed by

internationally renowned architect, Steven Holl. Having outgrown its existing space on the third floor of Bellevue Square, the Bellevue Art Museum is anxious to get into the new space. "We are thrilled that the fundraising campaign is going so well," said Diane Douglas, Executive Director of the museum. "We greatly appreciate King County's support and look forward to the day that we will be able to call the new facility home."

I am proud to support the Bellevue Art Museum and am pleased that my colleagues agreed with me that this worthwhile project deserves the Council's unanimous support.

Salmon: How will it affect the Eastside?

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In the Cedar River WRIA, King County will be working with the suburban cities, tribal representatives and water and sewer districts to assess the quality of salmon habitat in the Cedar River WRIA and make plans for how this habitat can be improved. Once the recovery plans are crafted and approved by National Marine Fisheries Service, King County and its partner jurisdictions will work together to implement them and monitor the recovery of salmon and their habitat.

What does this mean for you? At this time, we are not certain how the federal government and the courts will react to the recovery plans. It is our sense that NMFS is interested in working with us in a very collaborative fashion because they understand that this listing is a test case for how the Endangered Species Act can be applied in an “urban” area. It is our hope that the federal government and the courts will respond favorably to our good faith efforts.

Over the last several years, King County has worked very hard to implement regulations that recognize the importance of salmon to our community and our way of life. Furthermore, the last thing we want to see is the federal government taking control of all land use and zoning decisions in order to preserve salmon. Not only is it good to have local control and flexibility, but



A King County Water and Land Resources field technician monitors a salmon run near Cavanaugh Pond.

decisions made in Washington DC could have a disastrous affect on our economic prosperity and property rights.

Over the coming months, I intend to keep you informed about how these decisions will affect you. At the bottom of this page, you will find a brief questionnaire I have written to get your thoughts on this important issue. Please take a moment to fill it out and return it to me, postage paid.

Endangered Species Act Questionnaire:

- 1.) What level of understanding do you feel you have about the federal government's listing of Chinook (King) Salmon as a threatened species?
 - ☐ None
 - ☐ Some
 - ☐ Great deal
- 2.) Do you support restoring habitat (lakes, rivers and streams) for the Chinook salmon?
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
 - ☐ Don't care
- 3.) How much money do you think King County government should spend **annually** on saving salmon habitat in King County?
 - ☐ No money
 - ☐ \$10 million
 - ☐ \$5 million
 - ☐ \$20 million
- 4.) What do you think is the most appropriate funding source for the restoration of salmon habitat?
 - ☐ Federal money
 - ☐ Existing local funds
 - ☐ State money
 - ☐ New local funds
- 5.) If new local funding sources are required where do you think they should come from?
 - ☐ Increased property tax
 - ☐ Increased sales tax
 - ☐ Increased building permit fees
 - ☐ Other: _____
- 6.) Would you support having a chance to vote on any additional taxes or fees proposed to fund for the restoration of salmon habitat?

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New Voting System to be Installed

King County is replacing the 25-year-old punch card system with a new voting system called the Accu-Vote. The Accu-Vote increases security, accuracy and efficiency in the voting process. The county will switch to the new system for the September 1998 primary.

The new optical scan system should be familiar to anyone who has completed a "fill in the bubble" form. The candidates' names and all measures will be printed directly on the ballot, making voting efficient and easy. Instead of "punching" holes, the voter will darken the ovals beside the candidate or issue of choice. The voter is the only person to touch the ballot from the time it is voted to the time it is cast. At the polling places, the voter will feed the ballot into the Accu-Vote ballot box,

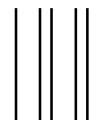
which uses an electronic scanner to instantly and securely tabulate the ballot. After the polls close, the precinct results are sent electronically to the counting center located in the King County Administration Building. For absentee voters, the voting process is very similar. Using the same ballot that is given at the polling places, the absentee voter marks his or her choices with a dark-colored pen. After that, the process is the same. The ballots are then mailed to the Elections center to be stored and tabulated on Election Day.

If you have any questions about the new system or would like to register to vote, please call (206) 296-VOTE (8683) or visit the Records and Elections website at: www.metrokc.gov/elections.



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Councilmember
Jane Hague



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